

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, November 6, 1933.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "Iron in the Menu." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, USDA.

--ooOoo--

Of course, everyone knows nowadays that food has a lot to do with good health. And most people know that one of the best ways to keep fit during the cold weather is to have an all-around diet. The more variety we have in foods, the better for us -- the safer we are. That's one good argument for the old-fashioned system of teaching the youngsters to eat what is set before them as a matter of course. The fastidious child who indulges in all kinds of dislikes at the table, who will eat only a few foods, can become undernourished just from whims and fancies. That's why the experts in child feeding have lots to say these days about teaching children early in their lives to a variety of foods, one by one. The modern baby, for example, by the time he is a year old will have had egg yolk; the more usual fruits and vegetables, strained, of course; and cereals, as well as his principal food -- milk. The idea is to start with small amounts and increase the portion gradually. This gives "His Highness" a chance to learn the flavor and "feeling" or texture of one new food before he meets another.

Yes, he'll probably object at least to some of the new foods at first. Many babies just naturally spit out the first mouthful of any food that is strange to them. Each child has to get used to new tastes, different temperatures, strange textures, as well as to new eating utensils. So changing the baby's diet from liquid to semi-solid and finally to solid foods is a matter of step by step. He learns to take milk, then water, fruit juice, cereal gruel and strange vegetables from a spoon and finally from a cup. He gets his gruels and purees thicker and thicker in consistency until he is prepared for the next step -- mashed and scraped or finely diced fruits and vegetables. Yes, and even when he is very young, he has hard toast or zweiback to exercise his gums. In this way he gradually learns to chew and swallow foods of different sorts so that by the time he's a year and a half or two years old, he has left baby foods behind.

Well, this long story after all is just by way of preface to what I promised to talk about on Friday -- foods to supply iron. Those of us who learn to eat many foods early, and who have a varied diet, don't have to worry much about getting the food substances we need -- that is, unless something special is wrong with us that takes a special diet. Most of us get our minerals and our vitamins, and our proteins and our carbohydrates without bothering about them.

But now and then, just to make sure, it's a good idea for the meal planner to make a little check on the family diet. Sometimes before she knows it certain necessary food elements run low in the menus. For example -- iron. Now iron is one of the substances that isn't supplied sufficiently in milk. That's why we

feed the young baby prune and spinach puree and egg yolk. And sometimes the school children in the family also need more iron-rich foods to build red blood. Even the grown-ups now and then may run shy on their iron.

Let's run through the iron-rich foods, just to reassure ourselves that, with winter coming on, we're using plenty of these at the family dinner table.

First, let's go over the animal foods rich in iron. Well, eggs go on that list -- especially egg yolks. Then meats, particularly liver, kidney, brain and heart. Then the lean cuts of beef, veal, pork, and lamb. Among the fish foods, choose oysters and shrimps for iron.

Now the vegetables. Yes, the green leafy vegetables stand first. Turnip and beet tops, chard, dandelion and mustard greens, yes and watercress and spinach, kale and the leaves of broccoli. The legumes are rich in iron too. They include lima beans, lentils, common or kidney beans, cowpeas and common peas -- fresh or dried.

Did you know that nuts go on the list of iron-rich foods? They do, particularly almonds and hazel nuts. But walnuts also provide iron -- walnuts, pecans and hickory nuts.

I don't need to remind you that dried fruits are good sources of iron, particularly dried apricots, peaches, currants, dates, yet, and figs, prunes and raisins.

Then, you can count on the whole-grain flours or cereals for this mineral. You can count on whole-grain wheat, barley, rye or oatmeal or crushed oats.

And finally, molasses is a good source of iron -- molasses or any other cane sirup.

With that long list, nobody ought to be suffering from a lack of iron in the diet. And as I said, those of us with varied diets from our first year on, probably never will.

Time now to plan the menu featuring some iron-rich dishes. First, kidney stew. There's a good and inexpensive stew containing one of the meats rich in iron. Second, panned kale. There's a good vegetable of the leafy green variety, also rich in iron. Now tomato jelly salad. And for dessert, bread-crumb cake.

Once more: Kidney stew; panned kale; tomato jelly salad; and breadcrumb cake for dessert.

Tomorrow: "Questions and Answers."

